

***IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE***

Applicant: William E. BOSTICK et al.  
Title: VIBRATION RESISTIVE STEERING WHEEL  
AND METHOD  
Appl. No.: 10/657,831  
Filing Date: 9/9/2003  
Examiner: Chong Hwa Kim  
Art Unit: 1748

**INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT**  
**UNDER 37 CFR §1.56**

Mail Stop Amendment  
Commissioner for Patents  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Sir:

Submitted herewith on Form PTO/SB/08 is a listing of documents known to Applicants in order to comply with Applicants' duty of disclosure pursuant to 37 CFR §1.56.

A copy of each non-U.S. patent document is being submitted to comply with the provisions of 37 CFR §1.97 and §1.98.

The submission of any document herewith, which is not a statutory bar, is not intended as an admission that such document constitutes prior art against the claims of the present application or that such document is considered material to patentability as defined in 37 CFR §1.56(b). Applicants do not waive any rights to take any action which would be appropriate to antedate or otherwise remove as a competent reference any document which is determined to be a *prima facie* art reference against the claims of the present application.

**TIMING OF THE DISCLOSURE**

The listed documents are being submitted in compliance with 37 CFR §1.97(b), before the mailing date of the first Office Action on the merits, and within three (3) months of the mailing date of the foreign search report.

**RELEVANCE OF EACH DOCUMENT**

All of the documents were cited as being relevant during the prosecution of the corresponding European application. A copy of the European Search Report is attached setting forth the portion of each document considered relevant by the Examiner. An English translation of the foreign-language documents is not readily available. However, an English language abstract is provided herewith for documents C1-C3. Consequently, the foreign language documents have been submitted in compliance with the PTO requirements and, therefore, the documents should be considered by the Examiner (37 CFR §1.97, §1.98 and MPEP §609).

Applicants respectfully request that each listed document be considered by the Examiner and be made of record in the present application and that an initialed copy of Form PTO/SB/08 be returned in accordance with MPEP §609.

Although Applicant believes that no fee is required for this Request, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required for this Request to Deposit Account No. 19-0741.

Respectfully submitted,

Date March 6, 2006

By 

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Substitute for form 1449B/PTO  
**INFORMATION DISCLOSURE  
 STATEMENT BY APPLICANT**

Date Submitted: March 6, 2006

(use as many sheets as necessary)

Sheet 1 of 1

**Complete if Known**

<b>Application Number</b>	10/657,831
<b>Filing Date</b>	9/9/2003
<b>First Named Inventor</b>	William E. BOSTICK
<b>Group Art Unit</b>	1748
<b>Examiner Name</b>	Chong Hwa Kim
<b>Attorney Docket Number</b>	048195-0119

**U.S. PATENT DOCUMENTS**

Examiner Initials*	Cite No. <sup>1</sup>	U.S. Patent Document		Name of Patentee or Applicant of Cited Document	Date of Publication of Cited Document MM-DD-YYYY	Pages, Columns, Lines, Where Relevant Passages or Relevant Figures Appear
		Number	Kind Code <sup>2</sup> (if known)			

**U.S. PATENT APPLICATION DOCUMENTS**

Examiner Initials*	Cite No. <sup>1</sup>	U.S. Patent Application Document		Name of Patentee or Applicant of Cited Document	Filing Date of Cited Document MM-DD-YYYY	Pages, Columns, Lines, Where Relevant Passages or Relevant Figures Appear
		Serial Number	Kind Code <sup>2</sup> (if known)			

**FOREIGN PATENT DOCUMENTS**

Examiner Initials*	Cite No. <sup>1</sup>	Foreign Patent Document			Name of Patentee or Applicant of Cited Documents	Date of Publication of Cited Document MM-DD-YYYY	Pages, Columns, Lines, Where Relevant Passages or Relevant Figures Appear	T <sup>6</sup>
		Office <sup>3</sup>	Number <sup>4</sup>	Kind Code <sup>5</sup> (if known)				
	C1	DE	101 40 473	A1	Bayerische Motoren Werke AG	02/27/2003		Abs
	C2	EP	1 063 145	B1	TRW Automotive Safety Sys GmbH	12/27/2000		Abs
	C3	EP	1 190932	B1	TRW Automotive Safety Sys GmbH	03/27/2002		Abs
	C4	FR	991.440		M. Bruno Pantani	07/28/1949		

**NON PATENT LITERATURE DOCUMENTS**

Examiner Initials*	Cite No. <sup>1</sup>	Include name of the author (in CAPITAL LETTERS), title of the article (when appropriate), title of the item (book, magazine, journal, serial, symposium, catalog, etc.) date, page(s), volume-issue number(s), publisher, city and/or country where published.	T <sup>6</sup>

Examiner  
Signature

Date  
Considered

\*EXAMINER: Initial if reference considered, whether or not citation is in conformance with MPEP 609. Draw line through citation if not in conformance and not considered. Include copy of this form with next communication to applicant.

<sup>1</sup> Unique citation designation number. <sup>2</sup> See attached Kinds of U.S. Patent Documents. <sup>3</sup> Enter Office that issued the document, by the two-letter code (WIPO Standard ST.3). <sup>4</sup> For Japanese patent documents, the indication of the year of the reign of the Emperor must precede the serial number of the patent document.

<sup>5</sup> Kind of document by the appropriate symbols as indicated on the document under WIPO Standard ST. 16 if possible. <sup>6</sup> Applicant is to place a check mark here if English language Translation is attached.

Burden Hour Statement: This form is estimated to take 2.0 hours to complete. Time will vary depending upon the needs of the individual case. Any comments on the amount of time you are required to complete this form should be sent to the Chief Information Officer, U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450. DO NOT SEND FEES OR COMPLETED FORMS TO THIS ADDRESS. SEND TO: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.



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Europäisches  
Patentamt

Generaldirektion 2

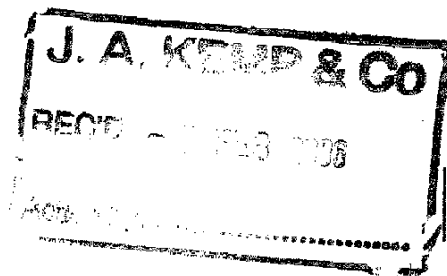
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Application No. 03 761 236.3 - 1264	Ref. N.93654 SLS/am	Date 01.02.2006
Applicant Takata-Petri, Inc.		

#### Communication pursuant to Article 96(2) EPC

The examination of the above-identified application has revealed that it does not meet the requirements of the European Patent Convention for the reasons enclosed herewith. If the deficiencies indicated are not rectified the application may be refused pursuant to Article 97(1) EPC.

You are invited to file your observations and insofar as the deficiencies are such as to be rectifiable, to correct the indicated deficiencies within a period

**of 4 months**

from the notification of this communication, this period being computed in accordance with Rules 78(2) and 83(2) and (4) EPC.

One set of amendments to the description, claims and drawings is to be filed within the said period on separate sheets (Rule 36(1) EPC).

**Failure to comply with this invitation in due time will result in the application being deemed to be withdrawn (Article 96(3) EPC).**



Van der Veen, F  
Primary Examiner  
for the Examining Division

Enclosure(s): 5 page/s reasons (Form 2906)

**Bescheld/Protokoll (Anlage)**

Datum  
Date 01.02.2006  
Date

**Communication/Minutes (Annex)**

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Sheet 1  
Feuille

**Notification/Procès-verbal (Annexe)**

Anmelde-Nr.:  
Application No.: 03 761 236.3  
Demande n°:

The examination is being carried out on the **following application documents**:

**Description, Pages**

1-9 as originally filed

**Claims, Numbers**

1-21 as originally filed

**Drawings, Sheets**

1/2, 2/2 as originally filed

- 1 The following documents (D) are referred to in this communication; the numbering will be adhered to in the rest of the procedure:

D1: DE 101 40 473 A1 (BAYERISCHE MOTOREN WERKE AG)

27 February 2003 (2003-02-27)

D2: FR 991 440 A (B. PANTANI)

5 October 1951 (1951-10-05)

D3: EP-A-1 063 145 (TRW AUTOMOTIVE SAFETY SYSTEMS GMBH & CO. KG)

27 December 2000 (2000-12-27)

D4: EP-A-1 190 932 (TRW AUTOMOTIVE SAFETY SYSTEMS GMBH & CO. KG)

27 March 2002 (2002-03-27)

whereby document D1 has been published before the filing date of the present application, and which is only to be considered when the claim on priority of the International application has not been met by the European application.



Datum  
Date 01.02.2006  
Date

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Sheet 2  
Feuille

Anmelde-Nr.:  
Application No.: 03 761 236.3  
Demande n°:

- 2 The present application does not meet the requirements of Article 52(1) EPC, because the subject-matter of claims 1-3, 5, 6, 9-11, 13-19 and 21 is not new in the sense of Article 54(1) and (2) EPC.

- 2.1 The document D2 (whole document) discloses (the references in parentheses applying to this document):

(conform claim 1)

A steering wheel (Fig. 1) for a motor vehicle comprising:

- a core member (5) having a given density,
  - said core member (5) having a substantially circular rim (2, conform steering rim 12 in the pending application);
- at least one dampening element (1) secured about said rim (2),  
wherein
- said dampening element (1)
  - is formed from a material having a density greater than the density of said core member (the density of steel wire being higher than the density of metallic plates 5),
  - and is secured in vibrational communication with said core member (the metallic plates 5 surround the dampening element 1).

The above technical features are also known from document D3.

The subject-matter of claim 1 is therefore not new (Article 54(1) and (2) EPC).

- 2.2 The subject-matter of dependent claims 2, 3, 5 and 6 are not new (Article 54(1) and (2) EPC), since they are known from:

- document D2: claims 2,5,6
- document D3: claims 2,3,6

- 2.3 The document D2 (whole document) discloses (the references in parentheses applying to this document):

(conform claim 9)

A method of manufacturing a steering wheel comprising the steps of

- providing a steering wheel core member having a circular rim section with a



- channel (fig. 1, 2: core member 5 is a circularly shaped section, which is part of the steering wheel rim, which consists of a opening forming a channel)
- positioning at least one dampening element (1) in the channel, the dampening element having a density greater than the core member (the density of steel wire being higher than the density of metallic plates 5)
  - positioning the core member and dampening element in a molding apparatus (fig. 2, 3: in the absence of any separating surface, the "revêtement 2,4" can only be applied by a moulding process)
  - and delivering a flowable curable material into the molding apparatus, wherein the cured material adheres to the dampening element and the core member, and secures the dampening element in vibrational communication with the core member
- (Fig 2.: the molded elastomere surrounds the metallic plates 5 and thereby secures the dampening element, whereby "Vipla" is a known elastomere material used in the vehicle industry).

The subject-matter of claim 9 is therefore not new (Article 54(1) and (2) EPC).

2.4 The subject-matter of dependent claims 10, 11, 13 and 14 are not new (Article 54(1) and (2) EPC), since they are known from document D2.

2.5 The document D2 (whole document) discloses:

(conform claim 15)

A steering wheel produced by the process set out under 2.3 above.

The subject-matter of claim 15 is therefore not new (Article 54(1) and (2) EPC).

2.6 The document D2 discloses the subject-matter of independent claim 16, conform the same reasoning as set out under 2.3 above.

This subject-matter is also known from document D3

The subject-matter of claim 16 is therefore not new (Article 54(1) and (2) EPC).

2.7 The subject-matter of dependent claims 17, 18 and 19 are not new (Article 54(1) and (2) EPC), since they are known from document D3.



## 2.9 Either documents D2 and D3 disclose:

(conform claim 21)

A steering wheel formed according to a method comprising the method set out under 2.6 above (and thereby as set out under 2.3 above).

The subject-matter of claim 21 is therefore not new (Article 54(1) and (2) EPC).

## 3 The application does not meet the requirements of Article 84 EPC, because the claims (all claims) are not clear.

3.1 Claim 20 has been formulated as a dependent claim, depending on itself. The scope of protection requested by this claim can therefore not be established. This must be corrected.

3.2 The vague and imprecise statement in the description on page 9 (lines 4-8) implies that the subject-matter for which protection is sought may be different to that defined by the claims, thereby resulting in lack of clarity of the claims (Article 84 EPC) when used to interpret them (see the Guidelines, C-III, 4.3a). This statement should therefore be amended to remove this inconsistency, preferably by removing the mentioned passage.

4 The applicant is requested to file new claims which take account of the above comments.

4.1 It is particularly pointed out that the new independent claim(s) should also meet the requirements of Unity of Invention (Art. 82 and Rule 30 EPC), as well as the requirements for multiple independent claims of the same category (Rule 29(2) EPC).

4.2 In order to facilitate the examination of the conformity of the amended application with the requirements of Article 123(2) EPC, the applicant is requested to clearly identify the amendments carried out, irrespective of whether they concern amendments by addition, replacement or deletion, and to indicate the passages of the application as filed on which these amendments are based.





If the applicant regards it as appropriate these indications could be submitted in handwritten form on a copy of the relevant parts of the application as filed.

- 4.3 When filing amended claims the applicant should at the same time bring the description into conformity with the amended claims. Care should be taken during revision, especially of the introductory portion and any statements of problem or advantage, not to add subject-matter which extends beyond the content of the application as originally filed (Article 123(2) EPC).
- 4.4 To meet the requirements of Rule 27(1)(b) EPC, the documents D2 and D3 should be identified in the description and its relevant contents should be indicated. The applicant should ensure that it is clear from the description which features of the subject-matter of any independent claim are known from these documents, when taken by themselves (see the Guidelines, C-III, 2.3b).
- 4.5 The new independent claim(s) must be in the two-part form in accordance with Rule 29(1) EPC, with those features known in combination from the prior art (document D2 or D3) being placed in the preamble (Rule 29(1)(a) EPC) and with the remaining features being included in the characterising part (Rule 29(1)(b) EPC).
- If, however, the applicant is of the opinion that the two-part form would be inappropriate, then reasons therefor should be provided in the letter of reply.
- 4.6 The features of the claims should be provided with reference signs placed in parentheses to increase the intelligibility of the claims (Rule 29(7) EPC). This applies to both the preamble and characterising portion (see the Guidelines, C-III, 4.11).
- 4.7 The applicant is requested to effect the amendments by filing replacement pages for only those pages which have been amended. Unnecessary recasting of the description should be avoided. An amended abstract is not required. The applicant should also take account of the requirements of Rule 36(1) EPC. If handwritten amendments are submitted, they should be clearly legible for the printer. *According to the decision of the President of the EPO under Rule 35(2) EPC (OJ EPO 12/2001, 563) one set of the amended documents of the European patent application shall be provided.*